

GRAND FORKS COUNTY SPECIAL MEETING – April 24, 2014 – 1:00pm
Topics: Amendment to the Grand Sky Developer Agreement and 2014 Grand Forks County
Agricultural Values

The Board met pursuant to adjournment with Commissioners Murphy, Knauf, Malm, Schmisek and Pic present.

Moved by Schmisek, seconded by Malm, to approve the Amendment No. 1 to the Development Agreement for the Grand Sky Enhanced Use Lease Project. Motion carried unanimously.

Amber Gudajtes, Tax Equalization Director, addressed the board.

David Burkland, Soils Committee Chairman, introduced the Soils Committee, Frank Matejcek, Jeff Trosen, Allan Peterson and Terry Stromsodt. The Soils Committee met this morning and they reaffirmed they would like to move forward with the soil survey implementation in Grand Forks County, they recommend a 20% reduction in the valuation in Plymouth, Niagara, Moraine, Logan Center, Loretta, Lind and Grace Townships, and they recommend valuing non-cropland at \$190 per acre. Non-cropland is pasture land, nonproductive land and range land.

Senator Tom Campbell requested the agricultural value for Grand Forks County be kept at the 2013 level because of the fairness issue.

Commissioner Schmisek asked Ms. Gudajtes what would happen if the values were kept at the 2013 value. Ms. Gudajtes said we would have to increase all agricultural values by about 10%.

Robert Drees encouraged the Commission to stay the course.

John Aamodt, Chester Township Assessor, urged the Commission to reconsider what Ms. Gudajtes is proposing.

Mitch McCoy, Logan Center Township, said he doesn't understand what the rush is, when additional committees have to be formed to look at the issues.

Brian Jodock, Lind Township, said there is land that is valued at cropland and it is not feasible to use for the production of agriculture.

Beau Bateman said the disparity began about 30 years ago. There was a case made that there should be a greater deduction for the soil in the western part of Grand Forks County, and the deduction was given. We don't believe a deduction should have been given 30 years ago. Mr. Bateman said he would recommend that the Commission approve the recommendation of the Soils Committee and Amber Gudajtes.

Moved by Malm, seconded by Pic, to accept Ms. Gudajtes' and the Soil Committees' recommendation and move forward with the Grand Forks County 2014 Agricultural Values, lowering Plymouth, Niagara, Moraine, Logan Center, Loretta, Lind and Grace Townships Agricultural Values by 20%, set non-cropland at \$190 per acre and form a modifier committee. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Knauf, seconded by Pic, to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 1:34pm.

William Murphy, Chair
Grand Forks County Commission

Debbie Nelson, County Auditor